Ministry of Defence had set up a committee to examine proposals of Army HQrs on 16th July, 2001, under the Chairmanship of Shri Ajay Vikram Singh, the then Special Secretary with representatives of all the three Services. The Committee submitted its report in January, 2003. The Raksha Mantri gave 'in principle' approval to the recommendations of the Committee in September 2003. The Committee identified two interrelated issues viz., high age profile and career stagnation. The Committee made a total of 15 recommendations encompassing both short term and long term measures.

AVSC has recommended a multi-pronged approach comprising the pull and peel factors, which include a strategy to bring down the age profile through a lasting solution and also short-term measures to provide some immediate relief.

Certain recommendations pertaining to non-select ranks have already been implemented with effect from December 2004. Review of the creation of posts and restructuring of the cadres in the forces is an ongoing and continuous process.

Pending Grievances of Gallantry Awardee Families

314. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints/representations of grievances from the families of Gallantry Award winners in this country are at present pending in his Ministry;

(b) the nature of grievances and the action taken/proposed to be taken thereon; and

(c) by when all these representations are likely to be disposed of?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) Two representations from families of Gallantry award winners are presently under consideration.

(b) and (c) One case relates to non-payment of annuity and the other relates to non-receipt of financial assistance. These are being pursued with the concerned Pension Disbursing Authority and the Rajya Sainik Board respectively and are likely to be finalised shortly.

Solving Problems of Ex-servicemen of Punjab

315. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have received representations from several ex-servicemen from the State of Punjab about their problems of housing, pension, employment to their family member etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps Government has taken or proposes to take to solve the problems of ex-servicemen of Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The representations received from ex-servicemen (ESM) of the State of Punjab relate to pension employment and general representations. Out of 5 pension cases 1 has been finalized and the remaining 4 have been taken up with the concerned authorities. Employment to Next of Kins (NOKs) of martyrs is being provided in accordance with the policy of the Punjab Government and till date 441 NOKs have been appointed under 'Honours and Gratuity' scheme.

(c) Government is consistently endeavouring to solve the problems of ex-servicemen in cooperation with the various State Governments and Union Territory Administrations.